

Message Text

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ORIGIN PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 /022 R

DRAFTED BY S/PRS: SPOULAIN:MG

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O 211903Z MAR 75 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 064366

TOSEC 882

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: COMBINED MEDIA REPORT, MORNING, MARCH 21, 1975

FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON FROM S/PRS

NO. 39

SUMMARY: HAK RETURNS ISRAEL WITH REPORTEDLY THREE TO FOUR MAJOR ELEMENTS AGREEMENT CLOSE BEING SETTLED. BOTH ISRAEL & EGYPT SAID EASING POSITION AND HAK CLOSE TO FRAMEWORK FOR AGREEMENT. OTHER U.S. OFFICIALS CAUTION COUNTRIES NOT YET ON BRINK OF AGREEMENT. SENATOR BUCKLEY URGES HAK BREAK OFF ME DIPLOMACY AND RETURN WASHINGTON RE SIT PORTUGAL.
WIRES

1. AP - SCHWEID - JERUSALEM: HAK RETURNED FROM EGYPT TODAY WITH FOUR MAJOR ELEMENTS OF A SINAI AGREEMENT CLOSE TO BEING SETTLED, U.S. OFFICIALS SAID.

STILL UNRESOLVED, HOWEVER, WAS THE PRINCIPAL ISSUE OF HOW FAR ISRAEL WILL PULL BACK AND WHETHER IT WILL GIVE UP THE MITLA AND GIDI PASSES AND THE ABU RUDEIS OIL FIELD, NEWSMEN WERE TOLD.

"WE ARE NOT AT THE BRINK OF AN AGREEMENT," ONE OFFICIAL
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SAID AS HAK FLEW IN FROM ASWAN FOR A MEETING HERE WITH THE ISRAELI NEGOTIATING TEAM.

THE KEY ITEMS NEARING COMPLETION ARE:

-- BOTH SIDES WOULD GIVE 'CERTAIN ASSURANCES' ONLY TO THE UNITED STATES WHILE OTHERS WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC.
-- A MUTUAL OBLIGATION BY ISRAEL AND EGYPT THAT THEY WOULD NOT RESORT TO FORCE. THAT IS A MODIFICATION OF THE NON-BELLIGERENCY PLEDGE SOUGHT BY ISRAEL BUT TURNED DOWN BY SADAT.
-- THE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL -- HOWEVER DEEP IT IS -- WOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN A NUMBER OF STEPS.
-- A UN FORCE WOULD TAKE OVER MOST -- BUT NOT ALL -- OF THE TERRITORY GIVEN UP BY ISRAEL.

AMERICAN OFFICIALS ABOARD HAK'S JET CAUTIONED THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS COULD STILL DEADLOCK, PARTICULARLY OVER THE WITHDRAWAL LINE.

HOWEVER, EVEN ON THIS CONTESTED POINT, SLOW PROGRESS IS BEING CLAIMED. AT BOTH ENDS OF THE 'DIPLOMATIC SHUTTLE' THE MILITARY CHIEFS OF STAFF ARE PARTICIPATING IN THE TALKS AND THE TWO SIDES ARE WORKING WITH HAK OVER MAPS.

BOTH ISRAEL AND EGYPT WERE SAID TO BE "EASING" THEIR OVER-ALL NEGOTIATING POSITIONS, AND HAK IS NOW REPORTED CLOSE TO A "FRAMEWORK" FOR AN AGREEMENT.

2. UPI - TEL AVIV: A SENIOR OFFICIAL ON HAK'S PLANE TODAY SAID THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL ARE AT A POINT WHERE ONE DECISION BY EITHER SIDE COULD SOLVE THE MAIN ISSUE OF HOW FAR ISRAEL WILL WITHDRAW IN THE SINAI DESERT.

HAK FLEW BACK TO ISRAEL FROM EGYPT TODAY, SAYING THERE WAS PROGRESS IN THE TALKS BUT STILL NO BASIC AGREEMENT ON THE EXTENT OF AN ISRAELI TROOP WITHDRAWAL.

HAK SAID HE EXPECTED TO KNOW WITHIN THE NEXT 72 HOURS WHETHER HIS SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY MISSION WILL SUCCEED.
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... IF THE ISRAELI LEADERS CAN GIVE HIM AN ANSWER FOR SADAT WITHOUT CALLING A CABINET MEETING, HAK EXPECTED TO FLY BACK TO EGYPT SATURDAY, THE JEWISH SABBATH. IF A CABINET MEETING IS REQUIRED, HIS RETURN WAS EXPECTED SUNDAY.

THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE AT THE POINT WHERE BOTH SIDES HAVE PRESENTED WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND LINES ARE BEING DRAWN ON MAPS, THE SENIOR OFFICIAL SAID.

OTHER AMERICAN OFFICIALS CAUTIONED THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE NOT YET ON THE BRINK OF FINAL AGREEMENT.

RADIO

1. VALERIANI, NBC RADIO, ISRAEL: JUST BEFORE HAK LANDED, ONE OF HIS TOP AIDES EMPHASIZED THAT EGYPT AND ISRAEL ARE NOT ON THE BRINK OF AN AGREEMENT AND HE ADVISED NEWSMEN TO PLAY IT DOWN THE MIDDLE IN EVALUATING THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE TALKS. ...

2. KALB, CBS RADIO, ISRAEL: FIRST, THE TIME-FRAME IN WHICH THE UN POLICE FORCE WOULD BE EMPOWERED TO FUNCTION IN THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES; THAT IS NO LONGER CONSIDERED TO BE A MAJOR HANG-UP. SECOND, MOST OF THE AREAS TO BE EVACUATED BY ISRAEL WILL BE DEMILITARIZED, AND THIRD AND MOST SIGNIFICANT, NON-BELLIGERENCY. ISRAEL WANTED THAT TO BE PUBLIC, EGYPT HAS REJECTED A PUBLIC PLEDGE. SO, A POSSIBLE COMPROMISE FORMULA IS NOW BEING CONSIDERED, NON-BELLIGERENCY WOULD BE CALLED A NON-RECOURSE TO FORCE. TWO QUESTIONS-- THE POLITICAL QUESTION IS WHETHER RABIN CAN ACCEPT THIS SOFTER FORMULA AND SURVIVE POLITICALLY IN EXCHANGE FOR ISRAEL GIVING UP TWO STRATEGIC PASSES AND THE OIL FIELD IN THE SINAI. THE MILITARY QUESTION IS EXACTLY WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE OF DEEPEST ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL. THE DEEPER IT GOES THE TOUGHER IT WILL BE FOR RABIN TO ACCEPT THE SOFTER FORMULA ON NON-BELLIGERENCY. THE NEGOTIATION IS NOW DOWN TO THE LINE.

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NEWSPAPERS

1. NYTIMES-GWERTZMAN, PAGE 3 - TWO COLUMN PIC WITH CAPTION ISRAELI WOMEN, PROTESTING CHARACTER NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT BEING REMOVED IN FRONT KING DAVID HOTEL WHERE HAK STAYING. TEXT EXCERPTS: HAK BROUGHT MODIFIED ISRAELI PROPOSALS FOR A NEW SINAI AGREEMENT TO PRESIDENT SADAT TONIGHT, AND THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE APPARENTLY AT A DECISIVE STAGE.

FOLLOWING TWO AND A HALF HOURS OF TALKS, AN EGYPTIAN SPOKESMAN SAID SADAT HAD GIVEN EGYPT'S COUNTERPROPOSALS IMMEDIATELY TO HAK AND SAID: "WE STILL HAVE MANY DIFFICULTIES TO TACKLE."

... HAK WAS GIVEN THE ISRAELI PROPOSALS, DESCRIBED AS A MODIFICATION OF THEIR PREVIOUS POSITION BY RABIN FOLLOWING 14 HOURS OF ISRAELI CABINET DISCUSSIONS OVER THE LAST TWO DAYS.

AMERICAN OFFICIALS SAID THAT HAK WAS UNCERTAIN WHETHER THE LATEST EXCHANGES, BEGINNING THE FOURTH ROUND OF THIS "DIPLOMATIC" SHUTTLE, WOULD BE ENOUGH FOR A BREAKTHROUGH IN THE NEARLY TWO WEEKS OF NEGOTIATIONS.

REPORTERS ABOARD HAK'S AIR FORCE BOEING 707 WERE TOLD DURING THE FLIGHT TO ASWAN THAT HAK WAS "NEITHER UP-BEAT, NOR DOWNBEAT, BUT ONLY BEAT." ...

ISRAEL AND EGYPT HAVE BEEN AT ODDS OVER ISRAEL'S REFUSAL TO AGREE TO WITHDRAWALS IN SINAI FROM THE STRATEGIC MITLA AND GIDI PASSES AND THE ABU RUDEIS OILFIELD, AS DEMANDED BY EGYPT, UNLESS SADAT AGREED TO STEPS UNDER THE GENERAL HEADING OF NONBELLIGERENCY THAT WOULD IN EFFECT TAKE EGYPT OUT OF THE ARAB STATE OF WAR AGAINST ISRAEL.

IN AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT LAST NIGHT, ISSUED HERE WHILE THE ISRAELI CABINET WAS MEETING TO DISCUSS THE DIPLOMATIC SITUATION, EGYPT AGAIN RULED OUT ENDING THE STATE OF BELLIGERENCY IN THIS STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS AND SAID SHE HAD TO AWAIT FINAL PEACE.
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BUT IN AN APPARENT EFFORT TO MEET SOME OF THE ISRAELI DEMANDS, EGYPT STRESSED THAT A DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT WOULD BE A STEP TOWARD PEACE. THE STATEMENT, FOR THE FIRST TIME, PLEDGED EGYPT NOT TO RESORT TO FORCE WHILE A DISENGAGEMENT ACCORD WAS STILL "VALID."

THE EGYPTIAN STATEMENT WAS RECEIVED COOLY IN ISRAEL, BUT HAK AND HIS AIDES BELIEVED IT WAS A DOCUMENT WORTHY OF STUDY.

REPORTERS TRAVELING WITH HAK WERE TOLD THAT TIME WAS RUNNING OUT FOR THE SHUTTLE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT.

THEY WERE TOLD THAT THE TALKS MIGHT FAIL UNLESS THERE WAS "GIVE" IN EACH SIDE'S POSITION. THIS GAVE A SENSE OF URGENCY TO HAK'S TRIP TONIGHT, EVEN THOUGH THE SECRETARY TOOK A LOW-KEY PUBLIC APPROACH. ...

THERE WERE SEVERAL RUMORS IN THE KING DAVID HOTEL IN JERUSALEM TODAY, WHERE HAK'S PARTY STAYS, THAT HE WOULD END HIS MISSION THIS WEEKEND. BUT THERE WAS NO OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF THIS. ...

2. BALTSUN - MILLS PAGE 4 REPORTS HAK MISSION AT CRUCIAL POINT.

3. BALT NEWS AMER - WALLACH REPORTS SAME (PAGE 2).

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4. WASHPOST-BERGER-PAGE 24: (ASWAN) WITH A NEW ME AGREEMENT STILL HANGING IN THE BALANCE HAK HAS DELIVERED NEW ISRAELI PROPOSALS THAT WERE THE PRODUCT OF 14 HOURS OF DELIBERATION TO SADAT AND RECEIVED AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE.

FOLLOWING A MEETING BETWEEN HAK AND SADAT, AN EGYPTIAN SPOKESMAN SAID THAT "MANY DIFFICULTIES" STILL REMAIN TO BE TACKLED, BUT ADDED THAT THE TALKS ARE NOT BREAKING DOWN ...

... THE CONTENTION ON THE HAK PLANE IS THAT THE GAP BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL WILL HAVE TO BE NARROWED FAIRLY SOON, ALTHOUGH THE IMPRESSION WAS LEFT THAT IF THE TWO SIDES UNCLASSIFIED

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CONTINUE TO SHOW SOME MOVEMENT HAK WILL KEEP TRYING TO REACH AN AGREEMENT.

YET THERE ARE SIGNS THAT INDICATED AN AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE.

FIRST OF ALL, HAK HAS INVESTED A LOT OF TIME AND EFFORT. A PROLONGED ABSENCE FROM WASHINGTON AT A TIME WHEN CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIETNAM ARE FALLING APART COULD SUBJECT HIM TO INCREASED CRITICISM IF HIS CURRENT ENDEAVOR SHOULD FAIL.

ISRAEL, AFTER AN EXCRUCIATING CABINET DEBATE, CAME UP WITH NEW FORMULATIONS YESTERDAY IN AN EFFORT TO ACCOMMODATE EGYPTIAN DEMANDS. AND EGYPT PUT OUT A STATEMENT WEDNESDAY THAT AMERICAN OFFICIALS CHARACTERIZED AS SIGNIFICANT ...

... ISRAELI SOURCES SAID THE EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS THEY RECEIVED LAST WEEK DID NOT GO FAR ENOUGH TOWARD A POLITICAL COMMITMENT TO END THE STATE OF WAR.

IN THE ISRAELI VIEW, SADAT IS DEMANDING AN ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM THE SINAI MOUNTAIN PASSES AND THE OIL FIELDS AT ABU RUDEIS, WITHOUT BEING WILLING TO GIVE ANYTHING IN RETURN.

SOURCES IN ISRAEL SAY HAWKS AND DOVES ARE UNITED IN THEIR DEMAND FOR EGYPTIAN POLITICAL CONCESSIONS. IT WAS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE CABINET DEBATE WAS DEVOTED TO A SEARCH FOR NEW FORMULATIONS AND POSSIBLY ALTERNATE PROPOSALS THAT COULD KEEP THE NEGOTIATIONS GOING AND AVOID THE IMPRESSION THAT IT IS ISRAEL THAT IS BALKING AT A SETTLEMENT.

THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT ISRAEL WAS CONSIDERING A LESS AMBITIOUS PULLBACK THAN SADAT IS DEMANDING IN EXCHANGE

FOR MORE LIMITED EGYPTIAN CONCESSIONS. THE PROPOSAL REPORTEDLY WOULD ALLOW THE EGYPTIANS TO DRAW OIL FROM ABU RUDEIS.

AMERICAN OFFICIALS SAID THE EGYPTIAN STATEMENT RELEASED WEDNESDAY, WHICH CONTAINED AN IMPLICIT UNCLASSIFIED

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PLEDGE NOT TO RESORT TO THE USE OF FORCE, HAD MADE NO NOTICIBLE IMPACT ON THE ISRAELI DELIBERATIONS. HAK'S VIEW IS THAT SUCH A FORMAL EGYPTIAN STATEMENT TELLING ISRAEL THAT A NEW AGREEMENT WOULD BE NOT ONLY A

DISENGAGEMENT BUT ALSO A TURNING TOWARD PEACE WAS "NOT A MINOR THING." THE STATEMENT WAS SEEN AS A "RATHER EXPLICIT COMMITMENT" TO THE PROCESS OF PEACE ALTHOUGH CONTAINED LITTLE THAT WAS ENTIRELY NEW.

-WASHINGTON - SEN. BUCKLEY TODAY URGED HAK TO BREAK OFF HIS ME DIPLOMACY AND RETURN WASHINGTON TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION IN PORTUGAL.

BUCKLEY CALLED IT "THE MOST PROFOUND CRISIS SINCE THE END OF WWII" BECAUSE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS ARE TRYING TO ASSUME CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT.

IN A STATEMENT RELEASED AT A NEWS CONFERENCE WITH SENS. GOLDWATER, HUMPHREY, AND BUCKLEY SAID THE SOVIET UNION IS SENDING THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS \$10 MILLION A MONTH.

HE PREDICTED THAT IF COMMUNISTS COME TO POWER, THE SOVIET NAVY WOULD ACQUIRE BASE RIGHTS IN PORTUGAL WHICH WILL MAKE THE POSITION OF THE U.S. 6TH FLEET "UNTENABLE" IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA.

"I BELIEVE THAT THE PLACE FOR OUR SECRETARY OF STATE -- AND FOREIGN ADVISER TO THE PRESIDENT -- IN THIS SITUATION IS AT THE COMMAND CENTER," HE SAID.

"I URGE SECRETARY KISSINGER TO DELEGATE HIS SHUTTLE SERVICE TO ONE OF HIS ABLE AND QUALIFIED ASSOCIATES, AND TO RETURN HERE FOR URGENT CONSULTATIONS AND DECISIONS."

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE064366
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: S/PRS: SPOULAIN:MG
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750099-1106
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750399/baaaagvl.tel
Line Count: 312
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN PRS
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hartledg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 MAR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 MAR 2003 by HageRS>; APPROVED <26 FEB 2004 by hartledg>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: OVIP, (KISSINGER, HENRY A)
To: JERUSALEM
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006